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**Testimony of the
Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce
to the Labor Committee**

March 9, 2006

RE: SB 462, An Act Concerning A Fair Share Health Care Surcharge

Chairman Prague, Chairman Ryan, members of the Labor committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today **in Opposition to SB 462, An Act Concerning a Fair Share Health Care Surcharge**. My name is Louise DiCocco-Beauton, and I am Director of Governmental Affairs for the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce. The Greater New Haven Chamber is a regional business organization with more than 1800 members from 15 cities and towns in the region.

SB 462 creates a "pay or play" health care tax on certain Connecticut businesses and would require employers to pay for employee health insurance through a state-run pool if they're not providing coverage that meets standards determined by the legislature. "Pay or play" health care tax proposals do not address the true problem with health care and the reason why companies constantly struggle to provide and maintain health insurance for their employees: affordability.

Providing high quality and affordable health care benefits is a top priority for Connecticut businesses. Employers recognize that providing adequate health care coverage is a ~~competitive benefit and~~ critical component in attracting and retaining employees.

The Connecticut General Assembly opened with bipartisan support for measures to increase job creation and improve economic growth. This bill sends the opposite message and promotes an image that Connecticut is a business unfriendly state.

The Chamber urges you to oppose this legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information, please contact Louise DiCocco-Beauton Esq., Director of Governmental Affairs, Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce, at (203) 782-4330.